



Plant Spacing Guide

Use this fillable guide to measure your planting space, plan proper spacing, and keep notes before you buy. The goal is simple: give plants enough room to grow without crowding walkways, windows, fences, or each other.

Phone tip

If the PDF opens in your browser, tap Share and choose Open in Adobe Acrobat or Save to Files. Fillable boxes may not work correctly in a mobile browser preview.

1 Why Spacing Matters

- ☐ Good spacing improves airflow and helps leaves dry faster.
- ☐ Plants stay healthier and are easier to prune and maintain.
- ☐ Walkways, windows, fences, and foundations remain accessible.
- ☐ Your bed looks balanced now and still works when plants mature.

2 The Basic Rule

Use the plant's mature width - not the size it is in the nursery pot. For most shrubs, center-to-center spacing is usually close to the plant's mature width. Always check the plant tag or care guide for the exact variety.

Example

A shrub that matures 4 feet wide is usually spaced about 4 feet from the center of one plant to the center of the next.

3 Before You Buy Checklist

- ☐ I checked the mature width, not just the current pot size.
- ☐ I understand the recommended center-to-center spacing.
- ☐ I allowed room near structures, utilities, and walkways.
- ☐ I allowed room for future growth and airflow.
- ☐ I will verify the plant tag for the exact cultivar.



Measure Your Planting Area

1 Bed Measurements

Bed or area name

Date measured

Bed length

Bed width/depth

Nearest walkway/fence/wall

Sun exposure

Soil or drainage notes

2 Clearance Notes

☐

House or wall: leave extra room beyond the plant mature edge.

☐

Walkway or driveway: keep mature foliage from hanging into the path.

☐

Fence: leave access for trimming and airflow.

☐

AC unit or meter: maintain clear service access and airflow.

3 My Space Notes

Type notes about obstacles, utilities, roots, downspouts, or nearby trees:



Plant Spacing Plan

Use mature size as your starting point. Leave enough room for natural shape, air movement, pruning, and easy maintenance.

Plant / Cultivar	Mature Width	Spacing	Quantity	Clearance Notes



Plant Spacing Reference

1 General Spacing by Mature Width

Mature Width	Typical Spacing	From Wall	Best Use
1-2 ft	1-2 ft apart	12-18 in	Edging, small accents
2-3 ft	2-3 ft apart	18-24 in	Low foundation beds
3-4 ft	3-4 ft apart	2-3 ft	Compact shrubs
4-6 ft	4-6 ft apart	3-4 ft	Medium shrubs
6-8 ft	6-8 ft apart	4-5 ft	Large shrubs/screens
8+ ft	8+ ft apart	5+ ft	Large screens/specimens

2 Common Southern Landscape Examples

Dwarf hydrangea	3-5 ft	3-5 ft	Part sun
Compact azalea	3-4 ft	3-4 ft	Part sun
Dwarf abelia	3-4 ft	3-4 ft	Sun/part sun
Gardenia	3-5 ft	3-5 ft	Sun/part sun
Spirea	2-4 ft	2-4 ft	Full sun
Oakleaf hydrangea	6-10 ft	6-10 ft	Part sun

3 Spacing Situations to Think Through

- ☐ For a hedge, I checked whether spacing is for touching or separate plants.
- ☐ In a mixed bed, I allowed each plant to reach its natural shape.
- ☐ I left access for pruning, watering, and maintenance.
- ☐ I considered roots, downspouts, utilities, and nearby trees.



Quantity Calculator

1 Quick Spacing Formula

For a straight row: bed length divided by plant spacing = approximate number of plants. Round down when the answer is not a whole number, then check both ends for clearance.

Usable bed length

Chosen spacing

Estimated quantity

Calculation notes:

2 Sketch the Planting Layout

Mark plant centers, bed edges, structures, and planned clearance. This box is fillable for typed notes.

3 Final Check

- ☐ My plants have room to reach mature size.
- ☐ I left room around walkways, windows, fences, and utilities.
- ☐ I checked each plant tag or care guide before buying.
- ☐ I saved this PDF and can print it if needed.